



Sad, but true, facts:

- ◆ 1 out of every 3 girls and 1 out of every 6 boys will be sexually victimized prior to turning age 18. This happens here!
- ◆ Abuse and neglect occurs every day, in every community, in McLean, Livingston and DeWitt counties.
- ◆ In 2008, our Child Advocacy Centers coordinated interviews for 406 children regarding allegations of abuse.
- ◆ Child abuse knows no cultural, racial, educational or economic barriers.

**Child Protection Network
Children's Advocacy Center
CASA Program**

**200 W. Front St. 5th floor
Bloomington, IL 61701
Phone: 309-888-5656
Fax: 309-888-4969**

**Child Protection
Network**



Children's Advocacy Center
*Serving
McLean, Livingston
and DeWitt Counties*



Who are we?

Child Protection Network

The Children's Advocacy Center and the Court Appointed Special Advocate (CASA) program are dedicated to serving the best interests of abused and neglected children.

In 1989, legislation mandated the creation of Child Advocacy Center Boards and the development of protocols coordinating the investigation, prosecution and treatment of all child sexual abuse reports for children in Illinois. In 1994, McLean County voters passed a referendum allowing the Children's Advocacy Center to become a part of McLean County's government, while allowing a not-for profit designation to exist with our partner, the McLean County Child Protection Network (CPN). In 1996 the Children's Advocacy Center fulfilled requirements to become an accredited member of the National Children's Alliance (NCA). Membership from NCA documents that qualitative program standards are met.

CPN is the *not for profit* umbrella organization that assists the Children's Advocacy Center and the Court Appointed Special Advocate (CASA) program, financially. Only one-quarter of our funding comes from tax dollars. The remainder of our revenue is generated from grant dollars and fundraising efforts. There is no charge for any of the services that we provide to child victims and their non-offending caregivers.



Our Programs

Children's Advocacy Center

The Children's Advocacy Center is the front door for children to walk through when there have been allegations that they have suffered sexual or severe physical abuse. A protocol is in place with the Illinois Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) and law enforcement agencies, that require children to be interviewed by a forensic specialist, in a child friendly setting, utilizing the talents of a multi-disciplinary approach. All efforts are made to reduce the trauma to the child victim and their non-offending caregivers. A Child Family Advocate on staff assists the family throughout the court process, and we have a trained, licensed therapist on staff to work with these child victims and their non-offending family members.

Court Appointed Special Advocate (CASA) Program

The CASA program trains community volunteers to advocate for the best interest of our community's abused and neglected children that are living in foster care.

- ◆ CASAs are everyday people trained to serve as powerful advocates who represent the child's perspective in abuse and neglect cases within the court system.
- ◆ CASAs are appointed by judges to independently evaluate and report on a child's progress within the court system.
- ◆ CASAs champion the best interests of abused and neglected children while in the court system so they have a chance to thrive.
- ◆ CASAs make sure that the child doesn't get lost in the overburdened legal and social welfare system or languish in foster care.
- ◆ CASAs offer stability and consistency to a child.

Currently, CASAs advocate for 120 children in the legal system; another 300 need your help.

Mission Statement

- ◆ We believe that all children should have the opportunity to develop to their fullest potential in a safe and loving home environment.
- ◆ We believe that it is in the best interest of abused children to have a multi-disciplinary team serve on their behalf to collaborate across agencies (law enforcement, DCFS, social welfare, legal system).
- ◆ We believe that abused and neglected children deserve a CASA to speak out for them and help the court in deciding what is in their best interest.
- ◆ We believe that survivors, both adults and children, need ongoing support.
- ◆ We believe that our community needs to be educated on issues relating to child abuse and neglect and prevention.

MAKE A LIFE LONG DIFFERENCE FOR A CHILD

How Can You Help?

- ◆ Speak up for a child. Don't tolerate any form of abuse or neglect!
- ◆ Volunteer to become a CASA.
- ◆ Help us help our children by being a financial contributor to the Child Protection Network. Your donation will be used to help child victims in our community, and is tax deductible.
- ◆ Be a friend of the Blue Kids! The Blue Kids are part of our annual April Child Abuse Awareness Month.
- ◆ Educate your family and friends about child abuse. It happens here! Your voice can make a difference.